Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SANTO 00990 021356Z
ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15
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COME-00 FRB-01 XMB-04 OPIC-06 LAB-04 SIL-01 AGRE-00
/104 W
----------030918 112524 /10
R 021300Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO
TO SECSTATE WASHDCS9844
INFO AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE

UNCLAS SANTO DOMINGO 990

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EAGR, PGOV, DR
SUBJECT: INDEPENDENCE DAY SPEECH: PRESIDENT BALAGUER DEFENDS HIS GOVERNMENT'S PROGRAM OF AGRARIAN REFORM

REF: SANTO DOMINGO 948

1. IN HIS INDEPENDENCE DAY SPEECH PRESIDENT BALAGUER DEFENDED HIS GOVERNMENT'S PERFORMANCE IN CARRYING OUT AGRARIAN RENWRM. ACKNOWLEDGING THAT IT HAD MORE DETRACTORS THAN ANY OTHER PROGRAM OF HIS ADMINISTRATION, THE PRESIDENT CITED THE LIMITATIONS ON IT OF HIGH POPULATION GROWTH RATE AND RESTRICTED AVAILABILITY OF CULTIVABLE LAND.

2. BALAGUER WAS CRITICAL OF BOTH THE LARGE LANDHOLDERS WHO FEARED LAND REFORM AND OF THE MORE PROGRESSIVE IDEOLOGICAL GROUPS WHO WANTED AGRARIAN REFORM TO BE CARRIED OUT MORE RAPIDLY AND WITH STRICTER CRITERIA. "RIGHTIST, ULTRACONSERVATIVE" LARGE LANDHOLDERS WERE WRONG, HE STATED, BECAUSE "AGRARIAN REFORM IS AN IRREVERSIBLE PHENOMENON WHICH MUST BE ACCOMPLISMAD AT A PARTICULAR TIME...", WHILE "PROGRESSIVE" PROPONENTS OF A MORE RAPID IMPLEMENTATION OF AGRARIAN REFORM WERE WRONG BECAUSE
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THEY IGNORED THE RISK OF INTRODUCING PERPETUAL CHAOS INTO THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR.

3. TO COUNTER CRITICISM THAT HE IS MOVING TOO SLOWLY ON AGRARIAN REFORM, BALAGUER NOTED THAT IN MEXICO, MORE THAN FIFTY YEARS AFTER THE START OF AGRARIAN REFORM, LARGE NUMBERS OF SMALL

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FARMERS WERE STILL WITHOUT LAND. HE ALSO CITED SPECIFIC AGRARIAN REFORM ACTIONS OF HIS GOVERNMENT SINCE 1966, POINTING OUT THAT THREE MILLION MORE TAREAS OF LAND WOULD BECOME AVAILABLE FOR DISTRIBUTION IN 1977-1978 WITH THE COMPLETION OF LARGE STATE DAM AND IRRIGATION WORKS NOW UNDER CONSTRUCTION, AND THAT MORE LAND WOULD BECOME AVAILABLE AFTER 1978 WITH THE ACHIEVEMENT OF PROJECTS JUST BEING INITIATED.

4. THE PRESIDENT OPINED THAT REFORM COULD NOT BE CARRIED OUT PEACEFULLY AT A FASTER RATE SIMPLY THROUGH THE TRADITIONAL MEANS OF EXPROPRIATIONS BY EMINENT DOMAIN OR BY THE DIRECT RECUPERATION OF STATE LANDS UNLAWFULLY HEALD BY INDIVIDUALS; RATHER, THESE METHODS HAD TO BE ACCOMPANIED BY OTHER MORE EXPEDITIOUS MEASURES, INCLUDING INFRASTURCTURE WORKS.

5. BALAGUER ASKED THE GROUPS ADVOCATING FASTER AGRARIAN REFORM TO CONSIDER THE TIME REQUIRED TO DISTRIBUTE THE THREE MILLION TAREAS OF LAND, THE COMPLICATIONS CAUSED BY EXPROPRIATION OF LAND AND ESPECIALLY THE RESISTANCE OF LARGE LANDHOLDERS TO GIVING UP THEIR LAND.

6. COMMENT: WHILE REAFFIRMING HIS SUPPORT OF AGRARIAN REFORM, AND TERMING THE DEVELOPMENTS PLANNED FOR 1977-78 AS "UNPRECE-DENTED PROGRESS", BALAGUER DID NOT INTRODUCE ANY INSTITUTIONAL CHANGES OR NEW LAWS TO MODIFY THE PROGRAM. BETWEEN NOW AND THE ELECTIONS OF 1978, HE WILL LIKELY MAINTAIN HIS CAREFUL COURSE IN AGRARIAN REFORM, TRYING TO BALANCE THE ASPIRATIONS OF THE POOR FARMERS AGAINST THE NEED TO MAINTAIN STABILITY IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION AND TO AVOID ANTAGONIZING THE LARGE
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LANDHOLDERS.
HURWITCH

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
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Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
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Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Document Unique ID: 00
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Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
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Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
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Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 SANTO DOMINGO 948
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
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Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
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SAS ID: 2938803
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: INDEPENDENCE DAY SPEECH: PRESIDENT BALAGUER DEFENDS HIS GOVERNMENT\'S PROGRAM OF AGRARIAN REFORM
TAGS: EAGR, PGOV, PDEV, DR, (BALAGUER, JOAQUIN)
To: STATE
Type: TE
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